

Charter Commission Minutes

Charter Commission Meeting of July 10, 2017, 5:30 pm, Police Station Community Room

Members Present: Andy Churchill, Mandi Jo Hanneke, Nick Grabbe, Diana Stein, Meg Gage, Tom Fricke

Members Absent: Julia Rueschemeyer, Irv Rhodes, Gerry Weiss

Collins Center: Tanya Stepasiuk

Agenda:

1. Call to order, approve agenda (5 minutes)
2. Public comment (15 minutes)
3. Review and edit master draft language (all articles and introduction) (3 hours, 10 minutes)
4. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours prior to the meeting
5. Planning: the vote to approve draft charter; future meetings; publication; etc. (30 minutes)
6. Adjourn

Call to Order around 5:30 pm

1. Agenda approved
2. Public Comment from Andy Steinberg: He feels the language regarding the hiring of department heads is too specific; he would like it more general. Also that a public process showing names of prospective hires would “chill” the process.
3. The Commission began with Article 1 of the July 9th draft and went through the language of the entire draft making changes. Most changes were stylistic and non-substantive.

All changes are reflected in the July 11th draft.

- Definition for Local Newspaper was removed, as it isn’t used in the charter.
- Deleted Section 2-6(c) as redundant.
- Removed Town employees from Section 2-8(b)
- Reworded section 2-12 (filling of vacancies) to make clearer
- Combined a number of sections in the Manager’s duties that related to keeping the Council informed or making recommendations to the Council
- Reworded Section 4-1(c) (filling of vacancies) to make clearer
- Reworded language in the Housing Authority section to make it clear how the tenant member is selected
- Discussed in Section 6-2 whether to keep the language on seeking diversity. Hanneke asked to delete it as possibly illegal and contradictory to the previous sentences. Gage and Stein wanted to keep it. After discussion, agreed to ask Town Attorney whether the language was acceptable.
- Increased number of signatures required for the Open Meeting in Section 8-1 to 200 (from 100). Also added language regarding that the meeting has to related to matters upon which the petitioned body may act
- Increased number of signatures for initiative measures to be forwarded to the Town Attorney to 250.

- Fixed language in Veto procedures to state that if a majority of voters approve of the council action, then it takes effect, even if the council was required to approve by more than a majority.
 - Fixed dates in transition article to comport with the new schedule.
 - Discussed whether the Town needs a special act to hold an election in November of even years, since the Town has done so before without a special act. Ultimately, the Commission agreed to ask the Town Attorney for her opinion.
4. Wednesday's meeting will start with discussion of the preliminary report, then move to Lauren Goldberg's and Marilyn Contreas's comments. Then, the commission will discuss the ward combinations.

Meeting adjourned around 9:30pm.

Submitted by Mandi Jo Hanneke